

focus on Careers at Niab

AGRONOMIST – POPPY DE PASS

Your role at Niab

As a regional agronomist I provide strategic agronomy consultancy to Niab members in the west, interpreting technical information from trials and translating it into on-farm advice through group field days, seminars and conferences, publications, web material and digital communications. This includes guidance on environmental schemes and technological advances in the sector.

I also provide crop recommendations to individual clients, field walking their farms, with advice on cropping, variety choice, fertiliser programmes and plant protection inputs.

Your previous experience

I wanted to be an agronomist, but was advised to start off in research, to see and experience as much as I could and understand the value of data; collecting it, using it, and interpreting it. So on graduating I started at Niab as a trials officer at the Sutton Scotney centre in Hampshire, and then moved into a trials manager role, including managing Niab's work for the Pepsico-funded Opti-Oat Crop Intelligence Platform.

When I transferred to managing the Cirencester trials centre a few years later, I also began training to become an agronomist, including taking my BASIS. When the local agronomist retired I became the regional agronomist for the west.

That piece of original advice was excellent, and I would pass that on to anyone considering a career in agronomy. I scrutinise data more than I may have ever done without that experience. And crop research opens up a lot more opportunities as you begin your career.

Your qualifications

- BSc Agricultural Crop Science (Royal Agricultural University)
- BASIS
- Facts
- NRoSO
- City & Guilds PA 'tickets'
- AICC member

Your future

Building up my client base and expanding my role even further. I love how joined up the process is - from taking a result from a trial I've overseen or even developed, to putting it into practice on farm, adding in some flexibility for variation from week to week, or season to season, and seeing the final outcome with our clients or members.

